

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 224997

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, MC

SUBJECT: ORIT - MEANY TALKS WITH VELAZQUEZ

ATTENTION LABATTS

1. FIDEL VELAZQUEZ, SECRETARY GENERAL OF MEXICAN
CONFEDERATION OF LABOR, AND AFL-CIO PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY
HELD CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK FUTURE OF
INTER-AMERICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION (ORIT). FYI THEY AGREED
IN PRINCIPLE THAT CHANGES IN ORIT ARE NECESSARY BUT THAT
THESE SHOULD BE DECIDED BY ORIT AFFILIATES ONLY AND NOT
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IMPOSED BY INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE
UNIONS (ICFTU).

2. REORGANIZATION OF ORIT IS ON AGENDA OF ICFTU CONGRESS

SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 19-25 IN MEXICO. PRIOR TO CONGRESS SIX MAN WORKING COMMITTEE APPOINTED AND HEADED BY ICFTU SECRETARY GENERAL OTTO KERSTEN TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON ORIT IS SCHEDULED TO REPORT TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES OF BOTH ORIT AND ICFTU.

3. MEANY AND VELAZQUEZ ARE REPORTED TO HAVE AGREED TO MAINTAIN STATUS QUO ON LOCATION OR ORIT HEADQUARTERS, ORIT OFFICERS ELECTED IN THE 1974 ORIT CONGRESS, AND EVEN NAME OR ORGANIZATION. THIS MAY POSE PROBLEMS FOR VENEZUELAN CTV, WHICH HAS BEEN PRESSING FOR CHANGE OF SECRETARY GENERAL AND RELOCATION OF ORIT HEADQUARTERS, PREFERABLY TO CARACAS. IT MAY ALSO CAUSE PROBLEM FOR ARGENTINE CGT, A CHANGE OF NAME FOR ORIT HAS BEEN CONSIDERED IMPORTANT AS A FACE SAVING DEVICE FOR ARGENTINES WHO RECENTLY JOINED ICFTU BUT HAVE BEEN UNWILLING FOR HISTORICAL REASONS DATING BACK ALMOST THIRTY YEARS TO JOIN ORIT.

4. IN ANY CASE, POSITION TAKEN BY MEANY AND VELAZQUEZ WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH TOP LEADERS OF OTHER ORIT-AFFILIATED NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WHO WILL ATTEND AFL-CIO CONVENTION IN SAN FRANCISCO NEXT MONTH. HOPEFULLY, ALL MAJOR ORIT AFFILIATES WILL ARRIVE AT UNIFIED POSITIONS AT THAT TIME WHICH WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO AFL-CIO AND WIN APPROVAL BY ICFTU CONGRESS.

5. AS FAR AS USG POLICY IS CONCERNED, DEPARTMENT SUPPORTS CONTINUATION OF DEMOCRATIC INTER-AMERICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE ORIT OR ANY SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION STRENGTHENED. WE CONSIDER FULLEST POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENTS IN HEMISPHERE, INCLUDING ARGENTINA, ESSENTIAL TO THIS GOAL.

6. NOTE: IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ADDRESSES PROTECT INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS CABLE.

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7. A SEPARATE MESSAGE ON OAS LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE, GUATEMALA, IS IN PREPARATION. CONFERENCE CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER REPEAT NOVEMBER 21-28. KISSINGER

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